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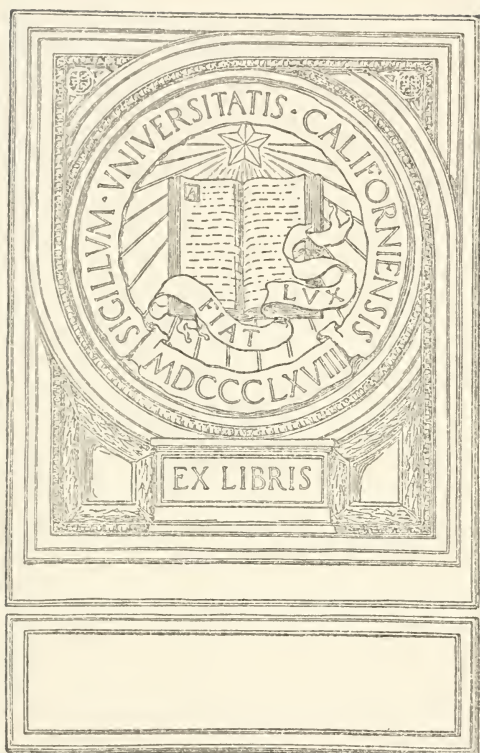


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Old Lamps and New

AND OTHER VERSE

Edward Willard Watson, M.D.





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OLD LAMPS AND NEW
AND OTHER VERSE

By the same author

TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY
SONGS OF FLYING HOURS

Old Lamps and New

AND OTHER VERSE

ALSO

BY GAZA'S GATE

A CANTATA

BY

EDWARD WILLARD WATSON, M.D.



PHILADELPHIA

H. W. FISHER & CO.

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BY EDWARD WILLARD WATSON

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NOTE

“My Withered Rose,” reprinted through the courtesy of Messrs. Harper & Brothers.

To my Wife

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OLD LAMPS AND NEW
AND OTHER VERSE

Old Lamps and New

I

Merchant of Araby, through the crooked lanes,
Under the steel-blue shadows
Of the minarets, lying
Clear-cut and cool
'Cross palpitating veins
Of burning air,
The hot, bright glare defying,
Ever you go your way; in dulcet strains,
From dawn till dark,
Crying, still louder crying:
"But one of all my lamps,
My wonderful lamps, remains;
Who 'll change old lamps for new?"
None, none replying.

II

Crafty Old Merchant, cease your plaint and go ;
We care not for your lamps,
You cry to ears unheeding.
The night comes fast,
Deeper the shadows grow,
And in the darkening lanes
Wise men are homeward speeding.
Hark! from the distant tower
There soundeth low
The Muezzin's cry,
" Allah il Allah " pleading,
And, see, afar a tiny light doth glow, —
The twinkling lamp of love
Our footsteps leading.

For Your Sake and My Sake

For your sake, aye, for your sake,
I 'll take the burden and go with you ;
The lash of the world on back and thew,
The tongues that sting with the word untrue, —
For your sake, aye, for your sake.

For your sake, aye, for your sake,
For a smile from you, a touch of your hand,
Along the ways of a weary land,
With never a friend at our side to stand, —
For your sake, aye, for your sake.

For my sake, aye, for my sake,
You 'll come with me — nor ever repent ;
You 'll come with me like a day-star sent
To guide my feet, ere my strength be spent, —
For my sake, aye, for my sake.

Love and the Preacher

“Then,” said the Preacher, “there shall be
Only the land, nor any sundering sea.”
And in my heart I cry, “O may I stand
Safe on that blessed land — with thee — with
thee.”

“No weeping shall be there,” the Preacher said,
“No tears.” Will then dear Love itself be dead?
For Love hath ever looked through tears on me,
And, thro’ the deep of tears, my soul hath led.

“No night shall be, nor any need of sun.”
Wilt thou take all of love? Yea, one by one —
No seas to part — no tears — no long, sad night —
Will aught be left for Love when life is done?

The Shadow of Love

Love standeth at the door,
By the pillars white thereof,
Where roses, to the roof,
Climb and swing softly o'er.

But a shadow dark is cast,
Till it seemeth a living thing,
That close unto Love doth cling,
And ever holdeth him fast.

“ Who cometh, O Love, with thee?
Who waiteth with thee without?
Sad is my heart with doubt —
O Love, give answer to me! ”

Heart, till thy dying breath,
Together with thee we move:
Love, and the Shadow of Love,
And the Shadow of Love is Death.

My Withered Rose

The garden is all filled with roses fair,
And thro' the shaded lanes
Rose-scented air comes blowing ;
Yet in my hand I hold and closer fold
My withered rose, my faded rose,
Its leaves no longer glowing ;
I clasp it all the closer, in despair,
For once she wore it in her tawny hair —
My Rose, my only Rose, of a myriad roses
growing ;
My Rose, sweet evermore, beyond the power of
knowing.

September's Garden

This is Her garden. The high noon is over,
The soft amber sunlight pours down on the wall;
Without it I stand, like a lingering lover,
And low thro' the hedgerow I hear her call.

This is Her garden — my love's own garden,
Where flowers of the Autumn are blossoming
still;

Where no man may enter and hope for pardon
Unless he enter by her sweet will.

Lilies, Tulips, and rare Spring-Roses,
Violets nestled 'neath heart-shaped leaf,
Glory's bloom that dawn uncloses,
Withered all in a day too brief.

But Peonies, red as her blood, bend low to her,
Yellow Chrysanthemums fret and twine,
Golden Asters lend loving glow to her,
Gilt with the ray of the red sunshine.

Why should I enter — the night soon is falling —
Why wait without till the darkness be come?
Could I but answer her heart to me calling,
Would she stray on in the silence and gloom?

What tho' Summer be lost and be ended,
What tho' the sun lieth low in the west —
Love is the Sunrise of souls that are blended
One with another — and love is rest.

Days will be moments and life but a vision;
Custom, a web that we'll break in delight;
Even the prim world we'll hold in derision;
Let us have love, and then — let come the night.

What will it matter when time has flown faster,
The world grown greater and wiser and worse,
What will we reckon then of death and disaster,
Loving and hating, and blessing and curse?

For in the heart of the Universe, beating
Ever by day and yet ever by night,
Still there may linger the joy of our meeting,
The sweet low laughter of love's delight.

Now may I enter, O Queen of September;
Thy rivals of April are faded and dead.
The loves of the morning no longer remember,
But the glad love born in the sunset red.

At Evening

The long gray shadows creep and closer fall,
The cool night winds across the meadows call;
High in the pallid sky the wan, white moon
Swims slowly in the silence over all —
Ah, Love, you weep that night must come so soon.

The sweetness of thy love steals over me;
Life never gave me love till I loved thee,
Now, at the eve; I missed thee all the noon;
So short they seem, the hours that yet may be —
Ah, Love, you weep that night must come so soon.

My arms are close around thee, and they press
Unto my heart thy perfect loveliness;
Shall I scorn Fortune's dear belated boon?
Because the hours are few is joy the less? —
Yet still you weep that death must come so soon.

At Last

Now, after many days, O Love,
I find thee, at the ending of the world.
Thro' all the earth's bewildering ways
I sought thee; now, empearled
With the last brightness of the west,
Into whose golden heart the sun
Doth ever wearily run,
I find thee — ever sweetest, last, and best.

Bare thy bright head, O Love, once more
Beneath his golden rays.
Gaze on the sky where seas and shore
Lie wrapped in fiery blaze.
There we shall dwell, some day, I ken,
Who here have missed the day,
Gaining love's guerdon only then,
When earth is far away.

Perfect Love

We would be as the angels — never in marriage
given;
Perfect halves of a spirit, binding our souls in
one;
Tied with a tie that never by the hand of man
could be riven,
Living each for the other in the light of the perfect
sun.
This is the heaven of love — the birthright of sin-
wronged earth,
Wrung from the soil of the sad, set in the gold of
the sky;
This which we ever long for, or forget in some
moment of mirth —
The hope of the loves that live, the glory of loves
that die.

To My Autumn Flower

How dear to me thou hast grown,
My late flower, my last flower,
No one but I have known,
In this last, this sweetest hour.
Spring sped fast, and the summer-tide
Fled past on the swallow's wing,
But thy lingering love will the last abide,
As the lingering roses cling.

Sweetest thy perfume of all flowers,
My late flower, my last flower;
None were so sweet of the fall-flowers,
Daring the winter's power.
But thou must perish, alas!
Thy leaflets in sorrow will call,
Till the ground grown cold and my heart so old
Shall see the last one fall.

Dread winter thy beauty would mar,
My late flower, my last flower.
Lo, he cometh from far,
And the storm-clouds over thee lower.
Tho' we shed our tears for the little ones lost,
The buds that no summer knew,
Shall I weep for thee, my regal rose,
That wast gemmed for one hour with the dew?

Nay, rather with hands that tremble oft,
My late flower, my last flower,
I'll dare the touch of thy petals soft,
I'll enter thy guarded bower.
Safely I'll bear thee, sweet, away,
And thy faded leaves I'll hide
Close to my heart on that gladdest day
When my soul to thy soul shall glide.

Dearest of all thou hast grown,
My late flower, my last flower;
No one but I have known,
In this last, this sweetest hour.
Spring sped fast, and the summer-tide
Fled past on the swallow's wing,
But thy lingering love will the last abide,
As thy lingering petals cling.

Good Night

Come, love of mine, and rest thy head
Upon my breast once more;
For all the drowsy world is dead,
And we, by Love and Silence led,
Draw near Sleep's waiting shore.

Fear not, I 'll ever love thee so,
Thy heart will ever throb with mine,
The happy days will onward flow,
And closer still our lives will grow,
Merged in a love divine.

Nor will death part — we both will go
Out to the world beyond in sleep.
Let the sad earth beat to and fro,
And stars above fade out and glow,
So we our love may keep.

Come, love of mine, and lay thy head
Upon my breast forevermore;
For all the drowsy world is dead,
And, we by Love thro' Slumber led,
Shall reach Death's silent shore.

Mother Love

O gentle Mother whom I made my bride,
On whose soft breast thine infant sleeping lies,
Lift from its tiny face thy violet eyes
To one who finds in thee his only pride.
Make me thy little child. Let me abide
In thy white arms while time all slowly flies,
Till the dread day when love and longing dies,
And in thy lap my pallid face I hide.

Call me thy child; so shall I ever be
Nearer and nearer to this heart of thee;
For thy love is the "mother-love," and I,
Unless I be thy child, loveless must die.
So dream that on thy lap I sleeping lie,
Lulled by the music of thy lullaby.

Love's Despair

Lord of the realm of the living, and Lord of the
dead who sleep,
Ever brooding alone, in thy radiant heaven afar,
Now henceforth, I pray thee, the soul of my loved
one keep
Safe in the clasp of thy hand, as thou keepest
some shining star.
Thou hast a million worlds teeming with life and
light,
I but a tiny orb of a soul — that is all I own;
Thine is the power that holdeth the circling
spheres of the night, —
Give unto me the soul that was made for my soul
alone.

Thou whom our lips call Love, thou who art perfect and pure,
Look in my heart and tell me, is thy love greater
than mine?
Atom of life am I, but a moment of time to
endure;
Spark cast out in the night from a blow of thy
forge divine.
Yet have I passion and pain: *thy* passion, *thy*
pain, for I
Am but a mirror of thee whose word made me
and my race.

Give me a moment of love ere the coming of
night, ere I die;
Find in the maze of thy world for my heart an
abiding-place.

Thou alone knowest, O God, how my life was a
verdureless field,
While over the barren sands I sought from morn-
ing till night,
Hoping 'gainst hope, evermore, that the desert a
flower might yield,
Or a pale pure blossom of love drop down from
thy garden of light.
Now, when my eyes are blinded, scorched by the
glare of the waste,
Dimmed by the days when I wept, by the nights
when I gazed in despair
Up thro' thine infinite sky, to thy throne, pray-
ing death to haste —
Now, hast thou shown to my soul one blossom
perfect and fair?

Sayest thou now to my soul, "Son, I have watched
thee long,
Seeing thy sorrow and pain, yet gave thee no
blossom to hold:
Now, when thine ears grow deaf, I send thee a
spirit of song;
Now, when thy hand is dead, I drop thee a flower
of gold."

All things to him who hath, desolation to him who
hath not ;
Garlands to crown the head that lieth cold in the
tomb,
Flame and the breath of flame for the soul that
the flame makes hot,
And never the light of love till life is lost in the
gloom.

For now thou hold'st afar the soul I have sought
so long.
Far in the silvery drift of thy stars I can see it
shine,
Caught, and swept from my arms, ever on, in
a hurrying throng,
Loving me as I love, but nevermore to be mine.
Dost wonder I pray for death? Hast thou made
my life so sweet
That I longer would linger here, to be mocked
by thee ever again?
Nay, let me lay my life, O God, at thy pitiless
feet,
And go into darkness and death, where the love-
less lose their pain.

Without Thee

How could I live without thee? All my days
Would pass in silence; now, thy willing ear
Is ever open. When my heart is glad
I tell thee, and when tears would flow I see
The answering drops shine on thy golden lash.
Thy voice doth tremble when some sorrowful tale
Stirs my heart. All the day together we,
Ever agreeing, discordant never, happily pass.
Nor is night dark, — our lives are lit by love;
But without thee, beauty from earth would perish,
The sunlight fall but dimly thro' a cloud
On the green fields; the flowers would color lose,
And the blue sky be ashen, and the trees
Bend heavily in the sullen wind, or stand
All motionless, having lost with thee their life
Of moving leaflets, with bright sunshine caught
Above their shadows, which we loved to see.
And the swift river, where we lingered oft,
That rippled noisily o'er its pebbled bed,
Would wearily go, singing a mournful dirge;
And at the evening all the stars we've watched,
And loved their twinkling and their kindly light,
Rosy red Mars, and Venus white and wan,
And the moon that shines on lovers, — all would
change,
And be but mute and tearful eyes of Heaven
Looking down on me, while my heart would
break.

By the Roadside

The Rose bent over the pathway white,
And it brushed in the face of the passer-by;
O red, red Rose, that lonely grows
Betwixt the road and the summer sky!

And the Rose cried softly, "I bloom alone,"
And the traveller heard as he passed it by;
"O red, red Rose, that lonely grows,
Your sweetness I fain would try."

And the traveller reached for the red, red Rose,
And gazed in its heart with careless eye;
And the red, red Rose it only knows
Why he cast it down in the dust to lie.

O red, red Rose, I longed for thee;
I never plucked thee — I dared not try;
But the red, red Rose but dearer grows
As I see it fallen and left to die.

I'll raise the Rose from the dusty road,
I'll place it proud on my heart, and I
Will cherish my Rose, tho' the wide world knows
How I found it fallen and doomed to die.

Love that Endureth

Will I wait for you? Wait till you bring to me
Life's one draught when my soul is faint?
Wait for you, watch for you, kneel till you cling
to me,

Free at last from the world's restraint?
Ask the darkness to wait for the morning,
Ask the blossoms to wait for the spring,
Love that endureth smiles in its scorning
On Love that droops on its weary wing.

Forget, Sweet Rose

Forget, sweet rose, the vanished flowers that shed
Their petals o'er the barren ground last year;
Forget the glowing beauty that is dead,
And bloom for me, and grow each day more dear.

Thou too, alas, must die. Thy bloom will fade;
Thy pink-tinged petals, too, will strew the ground,
And I, thy lover, all too soon be laid
Like thee — within the land where falls no sound.

Nor any sighing of the soft south wind,
Nor any rustling of the boughs that bend;
Yet may love be to us forever kind,
And let us live and love unto the end.

The world will glow with other blossoms rare,
The blood-red rose of life will call again,
The lover with his outstretched hand be there
To dare, as we, love's pleasure and love's pain.

But we will never weep because the night
Is coming fast and one must wait alone,
Because thy flower must die before my sight
Or thou be left to fade when I am gone.

Thy pearl-tipped petals may grow brown and sere,
Time's touch may tarnish all thy heart of gold,
But none will see — because grown still more
dear —

Within my heart thy withered flowers I fold.

Never can death part more my rose and I.
Sheltered within my soul thee safe I hold;
Together will we live, together die,
When love's sweet story to the end is told.

Life's Crossways

THE MAN

When all is bitterness — yea, life has come
Unto its crossways, and we may not know
Whither to turn, for everywhere is woe;
All lands seem foreign, and no spot is home —
Then unto thee, O Earth, I, who did roam
So far afield, come trembling; lay me low,
And stretch my weary limbs in the sun's glow,
Upon thy bosom, on thy soft, sweet loam.

Life on a myriad buzzing wings sweeps by,
And distant falls the hum of men and day;
They cannot harm me where at rest I lie,
As in thine ear my piteous plaint I say:
“Fold me, O Mother, to thy boundless breast;
I am thy weary child, and long for rest.”

Life's Crossways

THE WOMAN

Upon the damp, sweet grass my love would lie,
Where bended apple boughs their shadows throw,
And press her lips, red as the poppy's glow,
On the dark mould in her mad ecstasy.

"O Mother Earth," I hear her sob and cry,
"Dearest of mothers, thou alone dost know
My sorrows. 'T is to thee at last I go
For comfort and surcease of misery.

"Take me to thee; unto thy breast I cling.
Thou only dost abide — they all must pass.
The mothers of the world are cold, alas,
But unto thy warm heart my woes I bring.
From thee I came; now, when my sorrows sting,
I lay my aching heart on thy green grass."

To Mary by the Sea

I see you still as I left you there,
On the long, gray sands by the silent sea ;
There was blue in the wave, but a blue more fair
Looked out from your eyes as they turned to me.
My whole heart went to your heart with a cry.
I cannot leave you, I cannot die ;
And death is before me, and death 's despair,
For life without you but death would be.

The pale gray billows will ebb and surge,
The soft sweet air blow in from the sea,
The cool wind sweep o'er the meadow's verge,
But never a balm will it waft to me.
For, ever I close my eyes, and there
I see you still as I left you there,
I left you lone, and the plaintive dirge
Of the moaning sea in my heart will be.

Yet hope is left like a flower that bides
Where never an eye may see its bloom ;
A rare, soft flower, that the deep sea hides
In its faery caves, in its holy gloom.
Its colors fade when the storm sweeps by,
It shuns the glance of the careless eye,
But deep in the silence beneath the tides
Its rainbow colors the dusk illumine.

For now, be you near me or be you far,
With a world between, — or upon my breast, —
For you in the darkness there shines a star,
For me in my toiling there still is rest.
Kind fate holds close in its folded hand
For you and for me — in the whole wide land —
The choicest of treasures that ever are,
The love that is purest and first and best.

And now, if the night comes cold and lone,
And closes dark o'er your heart and mine,
We still are blessed, we love have known —
The part of love which is most divine.
No man may take it, no hand may lose,
No lip can scorn, and no pride refuse;
You have all the days been my very own,
And I, your lover, will not repine.

I will not cry in the dead of night,
I will not weary a god with tears,
Let the Power above do the thing that 's right,
Let the man below banish doubt and fears.
Time cannot vanquish the heart that 's true,
Time cannot sever my love from you,
For love 'mid the mighty has still more might,
And conquers time and the dying years.

Tho' never on earth we meet as one,
Tho' never our lips press close with a sigh,
Tho' anguish live till our lives be done,
And joy and gladness shall pass us by,
Still, living I love you, and dead I claim
Your soul for my soul — by its long loved name.
Death shall not find us at last undone
When your soul clasps mine with a joyful cry.

We were blown by the stormy weather,
Floating weed in a restless sea,
Down that flits over a field of heather
Wherever the will of the wind may be.
Tides that drift where we may not know,
Winds of fate that against us blow,
Grant but this, — that we drift together
Side by side — my love with me!

Love Comes too Late

Love comes too late — too late!
The shadows colder grow,
The north winds keener blow:
Love comes too late!
O Love, why come so late?
Summer is dying — dead.
The rose-leaves drop,
The heart-beats stop,
The summer birds have fled.

Love comes too late — too late!
Cold are the autumn days
And chill the golden haze:
Love comes too late!
O Love, why come so late?
The roses in thy hair
Droop — once so fair —
In winter's air:
Love comes too late — too late!

Lost Love

O lost Love in the dim hereafter —
O Love, lost when the chance was mine;
Love, scorned then with a careless laughter,
Love too tender, a flower too fine;
Scorned in the whirl of a heedless day,
Dropped in the dust of a trodden way;

Love, lost Love — will I ever find you?
Love, lost Love, will you seek me out?
Will you hear me coming behind you,
Will you turn again, will you doubt?
Eyes that had only for me a caress,
Will ye look back in forgetfulness?

Age

Must death end all? I thought to live with thee
Thro' the long years, to wander, hand in hand,
With thee for sweet companion thro' the land
Of living men, alway so happily.
I did not dream of age, — 't was hid from me, —
Thy locks grew white so softly, strand by strand,
And what cared I to watch the ebbing sand
In time's rude glass? Thro' love's blind eyes I see

Nothing but beauty. Time I may not mark
But by thy heart-beats, beating 'gainst my heart,
And thy low laugh as happy hours go by.
And now we watch the evening, and we hark
For the dread summons — must we ever part,
Or shall we lovers be when dead we lie?

A Name to Live

Make thou thy little mark and pass along.
The cliff that lines the way is fair and white;
Reach up, climb high, cut deep if thou art strong,
And write thy name in letters clear and bright,
But make *some* mark if thou wouldst live thro'
time.

Better an ill one than no mark at all,
For here we see thro' all the centuries' grime
Plato and Nero both upon the wall.

Personality

Two faces side by side bend o'er the lake;
Two faces side by side smile back again;
The west wind blows, the cloud drops down its
rain,

And rising waves the smiling pictures shake.
Life is a picture that the waters take
Of something out beyond them, that would fain
Know what it is, yet ever longs in vain,
For as it looks, Death's storms the mirror break.

And what are they who ever look and long,
Who strive to recollect a name forgot,
As one recalls some half-remembered song
That flashes thro' the soul and then is not?
Must they too perish as the ripples break
Their image cast upon life's troubled lake?

Music

Thou hast a power that all the ringing word
Of gold-tongued orator may never claim,
Bringing from fathomless depths of souls up-
 stirred
Hot tears of grief and shame.

Or like some Orient essence sweet, distilled
By blessed hand thro' endless happy years,
From flower of lotus to the soul that 's filled
With dread and formless fears.

Up to thy sky we climb, O mighty cause
That helps us, till the mad heart, leaping high
In answer to thy voice, — thy melody's laws, —
Would join thee, soaring heavenward, or would
 die.

Thy besom sweeps away the webs of earth,
Its dull monotony, its sordid care,
And gives to souls that perish a new birth
In lands of loveliness and regions fair,

Till we are young once more in golden youth,
And we are elders in a silvern age,
While round us cluster all we love, and Truth
Tears all our tear-stained history from its page.

Autumn Leaves

Ye die in colors rich and rare
As Burmese gems that mock the fire,
And yellow as the golden glare
That all men in their hearts desire.
The saddened sun thro' dreamy haze
Looks down in pity as ye lie,
And gilds with soft yet dazzling blaze
The earth on which ye fall and die.

Autumn

I am left all desolate,
Like the lingering flower that clings,
The last faint note in the song-bird's throat
Ere winter has chilled its wings.

I am the last lone leaf on the tree,
The rest, on the cold ground falling,
The wind swept free from the wintry sea,
And they burned in flame at his calling.

I am the last bright drop of dew
In autumn's sunlight dreaming;
I die as the brightness pierces thro',
In misty radiance gleaming.

The last faint ripple o'er the sea,
The wash of the wave on shore,
The last low sigh of storms that die,
The cry that cometh no more.

The last bright smile on the face that lies
Dead in the night — it has lived its day;
The last soft note of the songs that float,
The last faint light in the evening gray.

The Preacher

“ Lay up in heaven,” the preacher cried,
“ Your treasures ’gainst your coming to abide.”
Now I have nothing here to lay away,
But live my life with poverty and pride.

But I may lay away all the bright things
That here I long for, but which all take wings;
The riches I have not,— the house, the lands,—
And I will lay away the bird that sings,

The cloud that shades the ever-burning sun,
The rest that I will take when toil is done,
The mountain peaks I’ve ever longed to see,
The rivers that adown the mountains run.

The restless ocean and the cool soft wind,—
These I could never leave at last behind;
I’ve always longed for them thro’ life, but still
Have only had them safe within my mind.

And I would lay away so tenderly
The friend I wished one day to see,—
The love that missed me all these lonely years,
Waiting amid my treasures there for me.

St. Martin's Summer

O Summer of St. Martin, when the leaves
Have fallen from the trees and left them bare,
And soft, sweet smoke floats on the balmy air,
And for lost Summer all the woodland grieves,
Now for a moment short Nature reprieves
The gloomy heart of man, condemned by care,
From dread of winter, with its promise fair,
But only for an hour his soul deceives.

How sad and sweet thou art, how like to life,
When spring is fresh and summer strong and
 lithe,
And autumn finds that friends like leaves must
 fall,
While still we linger, tired of toil and strife,
Regretting the lost days when life was blythe,
And shuddering as the snowflakes softly call.

“For Whom There Is No
Daybreak” — *Isaiah*

Lo! I am one who ever turns his eyes
Upward in vain to seek the risen sun;
Finding but blackness, and in dread surprise
Looks down for earth — but earth, like day, is
done.

I am anhungered, and my soul doth cry,
“Give me of love and light a little span;”
Must men lose all things when they come to die,
And are the senses all there is in man?

Is longing only left him in the realm
That he must enter; must he hunger there,
On unseen waves, — a mariner without helm, —
Driven ever onward by his own despair?

With God somewhere beyond him in the gloom,
And earth below him, hid by death and night, —
Earth with its sunny fields and flowery bloom,
And ocean billows flashing in the light;

And silence now, where songs of birds and men
Rose round him, and the strains of music sweet;
All that made life so lovely to him then
Now lost in endless distance at his feet.

I, even I, am now as one long dead,
Unto whose eyes the world is, and is not,
Who longs in vain for life forever fled,
Remembering earth and all its happy lot.

Rose Madder

I have a color in my box
That I can never do without ;
I use it on the rugged rocks
And everywhere when I 'm in doubt.
Does life seem gloomy, and the way
My feet must tread grow rougher still,
Does darkness seem to end the day,
And steep before me rise the hill,
Then with my brush I spread a glow
Of pale, pure rose over it all,
And joyous on my way I go,
Forgetting ills that might befall.
Do clouds rise high and threaten storm,
I tint the sky with pink, and then
Beneath the spreading color warm
I face the frowns of angry men ;
And when across my way I see
A chasm yawn, my steps to stay,
I spread my color gleefully,
And still pursue my way.
O rosy pink, O pale, pure rose,
O hope that veils in dewy mist
The rugged steep, the storm that blows,
Who cares when once your lips have kissed
Life's canvas? You are hope and love,
You give the glow God meant to be
Reflected from His world above
On us who walk so wearily.

A Forgotten Idyl

THE HIDING-PLACE

'T was underneath the moss-grown gables old
Of a lone manor by the Northern Sea;
November's wind without blew drearily,
And, far below, the querulous ocean rolled.
Yet, thro' the pane there fell a rift of gold,
Raining its shining motes all dustily
Upon a chest, carven of ebony,
That hid within the darkness and the mould.

What can it guard so long? Could mystery speak,
Would chorus come from all the lost and gone,
Or would they whisper softly, one by one?
I'll lift the lid — shake off the dust and reek,
And drag to light, out to the merciless sun,
Whatever here with time plays "hide and seek."

THE STORY

*On stained vellum, wrapt in faint perfume,
Part muskiness, and part the scent of time,
These sonnets, from their very dusk and grime,
Speak to my soul and buried woes exhume.
The story's old; life ever doth resume
In newer lives its arabesque — no clime
But sings the tale, in oft-forgotten rhyme,
That tells of love misspent, and sin, and doom;*

*But here the singer chose a nobler theme
Than love that yields and falls beside the way,
Even that perfect love — the love Supreme —
That casts for love's own sake its joy away,
And goes into the Silence, where no gleam
Of faint, sweet dawn foretells the coming day.*

THE DAY-DREAMER

Dreamer of dreams was I. The busy day
And turmoil of our life I lived among;
Yet was I sad: no songs by me were sung,
And gloom and sorrow seemed my lot alway;
But still I dreamed, till life itself grew gray
And seemed a dream — yet to the dream I clung,
Hoping 'gainst hope, that, 'mid the visions flung
Thro' Slumber's Ivory Gate in disarray,

In all its perfect beauty might be found
One radiant vision, that I longed to see —
Love — sought in vain through all the varied
 round
Of dreamy scenes and misty fantasy —
And hear, 'mid Dreamland's faint, mysterious
 sound,
One voice — my love's own voice — speak low to
 me.

SLEEP AND DEATH

'T is Life we wake to with a sudden chill,
But unto Sleep we drift on lulling tide;
And Sleep and Death may at the end abide,
And our faint hearts with joy unmeasured fill.
Then dread not Death, nor ever deem it ill,
When to its open arms all creatures glide;
Sleep guards the gate, Death waits on the far
side,
And we must enter would we know its will.

Life is the field we sow, that we may find
Within the land of Death its ripened grain,
Nor ever there look back and cry with pain,
“ I gathered once these jewels, faint and blind,
This friend I followed far with weary feet,
This love — ah, but that day was passing sweet.”

THE GATE OF MYSTERY

And there is given us ever, when we sleep,
The deathless image of the death we dread.
When on its pillow sinks the weary head,
The soul doth thro' the gates of mystery creep,
And while soft slumber doth our senses steep,
Then, by a way we know not, we are led
Into the land where all the garnered dead
Forever, with the living, vigils keep.

There night is day, and day and night are one,
And years are as a day, and moments years;
Nor is there any deed we would undone,
Nor bitter memories, nor barren tears,
But all the life of earth — this race we run —
Is but a dream with all its hopes and fears.

THE LAND OF DEATH

There never shall we ask, " Lovest thou me ? "
There never shall we dread the hand of hate,
Nor dream, living in dreams, how desolate
Are lonely hearts in their mute agony.
There will the prisoner evermore go free ;
The outcast, bound in chains of love, tho' late,
Will bless his clinging bonds and happy fate,
And no more heart from heart shall severed be ;

Nor poverty, nor loss, nor dread despair,
Nor envious robber, stealing near the fold,
Nor torrid sun, nor ever pitiless cold,
But perfect skies above us blue and fair,
And high, forever, on her throne of gold,
Love, Queen of Life, shall fadeless garlands wear.

REPENTANCE

Out from the Wilderness of Dreams there came
Unto my soul a Prophet, gaunt and grey.
“ No longer waste your priceless hours, nor pray
To gods unknown: hear the all-powerful name.
The long ‘ lost Word ’ is found. *Love* is the same
As *God* ye know not. Rise, and cast away
The idols ye have reared; let in the day,
And burn your scarlet sins in His white flame.”

“ Change, then, my heart, O mighty Love,” I cry,
“ Let me henceforth think newer, purer things,
Heeding not if for love I fail and die,
Or if for love I lose the Angel’s wings,
And dwell in Hades, while afar off sings
In Paradise the perfect choir on high.”

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Give me the thing I have not, and let go
Into oblivion all the things I have;
Let me lose all the gauds I cared to save,
And all the little gifts that made me glow;
I cast them — riches, honors — down, to flow
Far from me, and to float where every wave
Shall overwhelm — drifted where waters lave
Some other shore than mine. Do ye not know

That for my one rare pearl my all I sell,
And, once I have it, to my heart I hold
Everything? Love is all! Let ring the knell
Of wealth and honor, and the baubles told
Off in their string like beads! I cry, "All 's well!
Love is enough! Let men keep power and gold!"

THE MESSENGER

Fly low, my dove, across the silent sea,
And bear my love a message thro' the night.
I watch with straining eyes thy distant flight,
And would that I could only fly with thee.
Fly fast, my dove; far off thy wings I see,
Against the red-lit sky, a gleam of white.
Haste on thy way, upon her bosom light,
And bear to her the love that throbs in me.

Under thy wing, and close against thy breast,
Where beats thy heart in love's leal sympathy,
There, till she takes it from thee, safe shall rest —
Where none but she can find — my daring plea.
Fly far, my dove, across the silent sea,
Fly fast, my dove; my dear one waits for thee.

SURRENDER

I would give all, — Love I gave long ago, —
Sweetness and light and earthly blessings all;
I would have treasure from the heavens fall,
And on her path thro' life bright flowers strow.
Yet must I hide my love; she must not know
That out beyond her heart's high garden-wall
I, far away, ever Life's chained thrall
Along the endless highways haggard go;

Keeping within my breast one jewelled thought,
One blossom plucked from out her garden-row,
One pearl of beauty by my heart's blood bought,
One field within my holding, white with snow,
One beam of sunlight thro' the cloud-rift caught,
One song of love in all my world of woe.

IN THE NIGHT

I cannot shut thee out into the night ;
For ever at my heart I hear thy hand
Knock, and I open at thy soul's command,
And ask not, know not, be it wrong or right.
For love hath folded us in arms of might,
And lost in love with thee entranced I stand,
As one who sees a new-found, glorious land,
And trembles, breathless, in its glowing light.

O Love, thine eyes seem ever sad, yet still
They search into my eyes for answer there.
What would they? Is it love they fain would
find?

Thine is the image dear alone can fill
My soul, my eyes, tho' veiled in wan despair,
For, gazing thro' my tears, love still is blind.

THY WINDOW

High is thy window set beneath the skies,
The winter sun lights up its diamond pane;
And as I gaze, it glints to me again
The light of love that shines from out thine eyes.
I never look in vain; my spirit cries,
And thine gives back the answer: all in vain
The cold world struggles in my soul to reign,
"For thou art life and light," my heart replies.

'T is but a glimpse, caught as I pass thy door,
A glance that rests a moment and is not,
A beam of sunlight on a dusky floor,
A breath of Northland in the summer hot,
Love's flash, Love's flame, where all was dark
before,
Lighting through all the day my hopeless lot.

THE VICTORY

For love no man may bind; nor law, nor age,
Nor any precept chain its beating wings;
Like to the wave that ever fretful swings,
And bursts its bounds in its white-foaming rage.
Let us read life anew: turn the dark page,
And sweep away the old and tiresome things,
And harken to the music new that rings
Around us; let us rend life's iron cage,

For all the world would chain us and confine,
While yet our hearts cry out, "We will be free."
There is no life but love — cling closer still;
Love that has won its way is Love divine,
And we have fought the world — it wanted thee,
But I have *won* thee, and my pulses thrill!

THE WORSHIPER

Ever toward thee I turn expectant face,
As weary pilgrim toward his Orient fane;
Gazing across world-spaces filled with pain,
To my one haven — thy blest dwelling-place.
And in the hours of night, when dreams enlase
My soul and woo it to its home again,
Ofttimes thine arms are round me, and in vain
I clasp thine empty shade in sad embrace;

And bending down to me in happy dreams,
Upon my brow thy lips a moment press,
As through the night thy pale-lit vision streams,
And lingers, like a shadowy, lost caress;
My wandering light, that only flits and gleams,
Alas, a moment in my wilderness.

TELEPATHY

Can living love, o'erleaping time and space,
Betwixt the soul of woman and of man
Make distance vanish? Surely if it can
I'll test its power. O Love, grant me this grace,
Come to me, let me see thy longed-for face,
For all my soul is empty, and a ban
Lies over earth's bright beauty. Rather than
Live on without thee, let me lose my place

And into silence drift, on wings of sleep,
To him who ever waits alone, afar,
Crying, "O Death, into thine arms I creep,
For Love hath lured me, with its wandering star,
Into a land where all the loveless are,
And left me, lost and ruined, in its deep."

THE ANSWER

But thou hast come ; flushed are thy cheeks with
red,

And soft thine eyes with joy's expectant tears.

No longer need I count the hours as years.

Love lives, and loneliness and doubt are dead.

But tell me, didst thou hear, and wast thou led

Unto my arms? Is it love thy frail boat steers

To the unknown, past dim, mysterious spheres,

Thro' which thy soul its maze to me must thread?

And I — is it because thy soul was sad

That I in sadness passed the sunless day?

And when thy heart is whole is my heart glad?

Are we but children in some marvellous play?

Ah, then — if only I might be a lad,

And we, once more, live in the days of May!

SYMPATHY

Does every throb of thy heart throb with mine?
Does every tear in thine eye well in me?
That I, night long, thy face o'erbrooding see,
And every fear that thrills thee, swift, divine?
What binds us each to each; what marvellous line
Invisible, more strong than chains can be,
Making *me* feel thy joy and misery?
Hath perfect love inwoven threads so fine

Of stuff that souls are made of, stretching far
Across the night and blending us in one;
Each pulsating to each, as distant star
Bursts into bright Auroras, when its sun,
In restless throes, through many a spot and scar,
Lets its bright agony o'er heaven run?

SILENCE

O silent lips! O lips that fain would tell
All that love knows, yet ever silent are,
Forever are ye mine, tho' earth's sad star
Into the blackness of the ages fell.
Rest, weary head, upon my breast, and spell,
With thy dear eyes, my thoughts that speech
 would mar:
Love that is told may come to us from far,
But silent love can speed from heaven to hell.

Sought for so long — found at the end of day —
Loved long ago, though unknown and unseen,
Now will I keep thee in my heart alway,
As though forever there thy place had been.
For life is brief, but love can make its hour
Worth all the lagging years that mock its power.

MY WHITE ANGEL

I raise thee, my white angel, on a throne;
With mine own arms I lift thee far on high,
And on the lowest step alway I lie
Before thy beauty and thy sweetness prone.
Weep not that thou must dwell there, all alone,
Nor gazing down on me, so sadly sigh;
Month after month must blossom and must die,
And love must linger till its flower be grown.

Time waits for no man — we on time will wait —
Lifting, from weary hearts, the appealing cry,
“Hasten thy flight, O Time, nor long delay;
The night comes fast, why tarriest thou so late?
Dost thou forget that mortal loves must die?”
But Time doth never heed the words we say.

DISCOVERY

I loved thee in the moment when my eyes
Met thine, turned to me in mute inquiry,
Wherein I saw a soul that seemed to be
Struggling to conquer fate; to agonize
In its despair, like unto one who dies
When life is brightest, or the things that flee
Before the hunter, in fear's ecstasy.
I asked thee nothing — needing no replies.

Thy name I knew not, nor thy place and lot;
I only loved thee. Now my life is thine,
Do with it as thou wilt — no more I say;
Yet do I know, at last, that thou canst not,
In the long years to come, ever be mine.
Ah, God, that one short hour should end our day!

ANGUISH

I cannot give thee up, I cannot go ;
Thee to my heart for this last time I hold.
I care not — let the bitter truth be told —
We knew not, once, but now, alas, we know.
Fate strikes thy soul thro' me a deadly blow :
No longer mine to have, nor mine to hold,
Love, like a rose, must die in sorrow's cold,
Its blood-red blossom lost beneath the snow.

Morning may come in gold, evening may glow,
But love's fair flower may never grow again ;
For thee, for me, remaineth only woe.
Our world of love will be a world of pain.
Apart we 'll live and count the hours slow, —
We did not know, ah, God, we did not know !

A PRAYER

Hemmed in on every side, in vain I beat
Against my prison bars. Man cannot aid;
Wouldst thou, O God, if to thy Might I prayed,
Falling in self-surrender at thy feet?
Not for release — not this do I entreat —
But for foreknowledge. Shall I be betrayed
By mine own heart, by mine own love dismayed,
Or shall I enter love's own garden sweet?

For life is but a weary war with fate,
And high upon the hills we strive to gain
Lieth the prize of life — where love doth lie.
It waiteth till the evening cometh late,
It longeth for its lover, and would fain,
It grieveth, looking down, to see him die.

DREAMS

Ever in dreams I see thee. Thro' the night
Upon my breast thy head doth lightly lie;
I hear thee in thy slumber softly sigh,
But wake to find thee vanished from my sight.
Dost thou in truth come to me when the light
Fades from thy violet eyes, and softly cry
Unto my drowsy soul — doth it reply
And fold thee in its arms in dear delight,

While our twin souls, over the silent world,
Laden with love and joy, unconscious fly?
Some memory lives thro' all my waking hours,
Intangible, in my soul's recesses curled,
Dreamy and faint, a wondrous mystery,
Wrapt in the fragrance faint of faded flowers.

FAREWELL

How can I say "Farewell," and bear to leave
Here, when I turn away, your love and care,
And flit in freedom to the blythesome air
Free as a bird? No heart is on my sleeve,
But you and I, each far apart, will grieve, —
I, when I think "She was so sweet and fair,
She loves me, and I loving left her there;"
And you, because fate's net no man may cleave.

O love, is it ill or well to leave you so?
For now I cannot have you, cannot fold
Your heart that thrills me, ever close to me;
Go on your way, and I my way must go,
The chill winds blow — I shiver in the cold;
Can fate be right, and I alone be free?

SACRIFICE

'T is mine to bear the sorrow for us twain,
'T is I must conquer — I must set thee free.
By thine own love I'll strike love's chains from
 thee,
And forge thee armor, proof, from out my pain.
I'll treat thee cruelly, light love I'll feign,
And slight thee, and then seem to heartless be;
I'll look aside while I might look on thee,
And let thee go afar, while I remain.

I'll wring thy heart, and rouse thee up to ire
And maddening passion, till at last, in scorn,
Thou lookest back upon thy fond desire
As dreamers look on dreams when roused at
 morn,
Safe in dissembling arms lifting thee higher, —
By anguish thou art saved, my soul by fire!

PARTING

How can I part, and yet how can I stay,
For love grows sweeter as the moments fly, —
The one great love for which men dare and die
Came to me, to abide with me alway.
Life flieth fast away, the threads of gray
Will fleck thy hair, and age his hand on me
Will roughly lay, but touch so tenderly
Thee in thy loveliness, if e'er he may.

Weep for the years that died and left no trace
That love's fond "calendar of love" can show.
So few remain, — so pitiful they seem, —
Death rules us out ere we begin the race;
Yet let us run into the sunset's glow,
For dark beyond lieth death's loveless dream.

THE DREAM OF DEATH

Yet in our dreaming, when life's sun is set,
And all our world is lost within the dark,
Then may we float closer with hearts that hark
For the first whisper, till our souls have met ;
And thro' the ages, and the ages yet
To be, we 'll fly in joy, spark linked to spark,
With souls rejoicing, like the soaring lark,
That never may the faded fields regret.

My soul shall build thee in the lucent air
A palace wrought with gems and gleaming gold ;
Thy soul shall rest within, divinely fair,
And we will watch the universe unfold ;
And far below catch vision, faint and rare,
Of a lost earth — loveless, and dark, and cold.

SO LOVE IS TOLD

Oh, tell me not "you love me," though you do,
For what can love bring now but grief and woe?
Apart we live, apart through life we go,
So tell me not, e'en though the words be true.
But I will tell you oft that I love you,
What time the world of men doth sleepy grow;
Whispering it where no man may hear or know,
Barring my door, and e'en my shutter, too.

You will not hear, unless my thoughts can flow
Out through my walls and reach your listening
ear;

I'll call you all the names that are most dear,
Saying them soft and tearfully and low,
But never dread, and never have a fear;
I'll say them in my heart when none is near.

RESOLVE

Smile not in scorn, made bitter by distress,
Cast not away the love my lips would frame, —
'T were better to be loved in grief and shame
Than spend the weary years in loneliness, —
Nor frown upon me when my lips confess
Their faltering love; nor altogether blame
If tears come to me when I speak thy name,
And all the world save thee seems valueless.

Thou wouldst not grant a love I dare not claim,
Nor can we keep our souls still white and clear
Unless toward the snowy height we aim,
Where dwelleth love that scorneth guilt and fear;
Where ever rises high the lambent flame
Of longing hearts, by longing grown more dear.

FAREWELL, FAREWELL

Farewell, farewell. Is it for years or days,
Or will the word go echoing on until
The voice that cries in agony is still,
And life goes out upon death's unknown ways?
Yet in my grief ever my eyes I'll raise
To something far beyond the good or ill
Of this sad life, — beyond the deadly chill
Of death, — and unto heaven give thanks and
praise.

For no man knows how hard a thing it is
To see his love's sweet face to his draw near,
Yet never press his lips to hers in bliss,
Nor ever clasp the form that is so dear;
Love that is robbed of its fruition sweet
Is dearer than the love where lips may meet.

THE DEAREST THINGS

And no man knows how sweet a thing may be
Till he may never reach with eager hand;
How blessed seems to sails that idle stand
The breeze that never ripples o'er the sea;
Nor can man know how sweet love is but he
Who lives an outcast, in a lonely land,
Where love may never come at his command,
Tho' he may pray and plead eternally.

For all these dearest things we hide from day,
Where none may see them — deep within our
 hearts;

The friends we sought that ever fled away,
And the fond love that fate unpitying parts;
And in our treasure-house they wait and smile,
And love sings softly, "Yet a little while."

ANGUISH

I cannot kiss the lips that turn to me
Trembling with love, yet silent in despair.
I cannot claim thee; let my love beware
Lest it add pain to all thy misery.
And I will teach my eager arms to flee
Love's amber, that would ever draw them there,
Where throbs the heart that all alone must bear
The burden of life's pitiless decree.

How could I, thoughtless, heap up care on care
Upon the head that is to me so dear?
How could I lay a heavier burden there,
When all thy heart is pressed with deadly fear?
I will not, nay, my hand must never dare,
Even with love's caress, to touch thy silken hair.

APART

Never in home of ours may we both dwell,
Nor ever rest together, side by side;
Nor ever to the world say in our pride,
“ This is my chosen, whom I love so well ; ”
Nor ever may we to each other tell
All the long day brought forth, but we must hide
All sweetest things, and ever silent bide
Unto the end — and then — no fond farewell.

This is our meed ; this treasure have we won
From cruel Chance and ever fitful Fate :
To live our lonely lives all desolate,
While each alone life's weary race must run.
Is this thy meed, O tender, loving heart,
To dwell forever from thy love apart ?

RENUNCIATION

I cannot live without thee; all my days
Lie desolate before me. Suns will glow
Unpitying, and the nights will darker grow,
And colder, while the hand of death delays.
This is the sordid parting of our ways,
Wherein each turns from pleasure, and the slow,
Sad step takes each from the other. Thou wilt go
Back to thy home bewildered — in a maze

Woven of love and duty; fond desire
Striving with honor, chilling thee with cold,
And burning all thy soul with raging fire —
Thus will it be till we be bent and old.
Yet will we conquer — Love that scorneth wrong
Has sung in our sad hearts its perfect song.

THE PYRE OF HOPE

And I must burn her letter. Here it lies,
Just from her hand; her very cry is there;
Her heart's outbreak of sorrow and despair
When hope in all its beauty falls and dies.
Yet must I make this dreaded sacrifice,
Lest to some eye her quivering heart lie bare;
So, let it go to the bright flame's red glare,
That burns to dust the words it glorifies.

O my lost Love, 't was all I had of thine,
But thy dear memory, that can never die.
I know by heart each sad and tear-stained line,
And with the ashes of my hope they lie.
Time may consume more silently than flame,
But in my heart will live thy dear loved name.

THE LAST MESSENGER

Fly far, my dove, nor ever back return.
I watch thee as I lose thee in the night,
Where vanish all the things that made life bright,
Like fleeting stars that still in envy burn.
Oft shall I wait, and oft my heart shall yearn,
Missing thy long-expected, joyous flight,
When at the eve thou didst so softly light,
And up to me thine eyes expectant turn.

Fly far, my dove — I bless thee for the hour
That thou hast given me — my respite sweet.
I bless thee for the rare and scented flower
That fell at even to my weary feet.
But thou, O God, who holdst me in thy power,
Hast led me by the hand to love's defeat.

LOVE OR HATE

And art thou Love, O God, or art thou Fate?
Dost thou not care when loving creatures fail,
And faces fair grow wan, and cheeks grow pale,
Or art thou never Love, but alway Hate?
Does all our anguish and our sorrow sate
Thy jealousy, and is the lingering wail
Of those who perish in life's pitiless gale
As wine unto thy heart all desolate?

Have mercy, for our years be few and late;
Have pity, for death cometh on apace;
Our little loves are far beneath thy great,
Calm eye, that watches o'er eternal space.
Heart cries to heart, and ever mate for mate, —
Hast thou for human love no resting-place?

DESPAIR

What art thou, Black Despair, with staring eyes?
Who formed thee, — what dread mother gave thee
birth?

Lost love, and vanished hope, and awful mirth;
And with them ruined Honor prostrate lies,
And terror, that has strangled quick surprise,
And all the evils of the evil earth,
Which clasps a myriad demons in its girth,
Who lie in wait for luckless man — their prize.

But most of all, Love, that was just within
The strain of arms that longed to clasp it there —
What time, across the cheek, swept wind-blown
hair —

Bright with God's smile, but shadowed by man's
sin:

Love that is half self-sacrifice and care,
And half the lust that would its beauty win.

JOY AND WOE

The sun is set — my sun — that shone a day,
Lighting for me a world of joy and woe.
They came together from the night, and lo,
Joy fades forever from my sight away;
But in the darkness of the evening gray
Woe cometh to my door, and now I know,
Till age with tottering feet doth slower go,
Anguish and Woe his brother close will stay.

But where art thou, O Joy — Love's child of
light?

Hath envious Night enfolded thee so close,
Loving thee as I love thee — takes he all?
Glide softly down from out the arms of Night
When he is lulled by thee in deep repose,
And at the window of my sad heart call.

REMEMBRANCE

Can I forget? Thy face is everywhere.
It meets me in the shadow and the light,
It fills my desolate dwelling in the night,
And in the lingering day still thou art there.
I pass thee, pale and mute, upon my stair;
Wan are thy cheeks; ever thine eyes are bright
With unshed tears—yet would I keep the sight,—
The precious chrism of this my great despair.

Thou wert so dear to me — thy love so rare!
Why must I lose thee? Yet I see the years
Stretching before me, desolate and bare,
When age shall dry the fountain of my tears
And wearily I'll bend beneath my care,
Yet still my heart will cry, "She was so fair!"

HIDDEN TREASURE

Call no man lonely, tho' he dwell alone,
Within whose heart one perfect love lies hid, —
Rare treasure, 'neath some strong-bound casket's
lid,

That he has found and only he has known.
What tho' his face has ever sadder grown,
Locking his secret there, his heart amid —
Like buried queen in some lone pyramid,
Whom time has quite forgotten, and has flown

Far into other lands, while sun and moon
Have kept their watches, and the yellow sands
Have drifted deeper, guarding, night and noon,
Their precious secret, lest from alien lands
A thousand seekers, eager for the boon,
Should bare her royal grave with impious hands.

THE LOST LETTER

This letter, stained with teardrops from thine eye,
Still brings thee back a moment — some faint
scent.

Like love's dead glance, time's lingering languish-
ment

Has all these loitering years dared to defy.
The writing — faded, yellow — can outvie
In its mute power the skill of them who paint
Earth's fairest scenes. Here 's one, — Love's last
lament, —

A picture, priceless, that gold cannot buy,

Left when I burned the rest. Was it accident,
Or did it seek some hidden nook near-by,
And now burst forth with memories redolent,
And all my proud forgetfulness belie?
It cometh, as my lost love's testament,
My worn and weary heart to sanctify.

THE FAITH OF LOVE

*Why will ye limit love, ye "Churchmen" wise,
" 'Til death doth part?" Why not beyond the
grave*

*Let Love live on, in love's own land, and have
Its perfect life? Say ye "The dead arise"?
And dare ye still to think the soul that lies,
Wrapt in a love for one more dear than all
The world beside, will wake and vainly call
Her name till every hope and pleasure dies?*

*Love's faith is stronger. Thro' the veil that hides,
Where eyes would pierce beyond the awful gloom,
Love sees and knows, whatever else betides,
Its birth and bloom in life beyond the tomb,
Where heart to heart will cling, and love will reign
Fearless and free forever from its pain.*

*For all the love ye know of is but dross,
Ye Churchmen arrogant, a sordid thing,
Which, did ye rise, ye would all gladly fling
Far away from you, counting it no loss;
But of the Perfect Love, whose silken floss
Your hands would stain, if unto it ye cling, —
The love that dares; that scorns your tinsel ring,
And reaches the dark gulf of death across, —*

*It will live on, in heaven or hell, I wot,
Binding the soul in torment as in bliss;
In suffering and in sorrow caring not,
So it forever with the loved one is.
Go change your minds, repent, and haste to blot
The page that sums love up in passion's kiss.*

FINIS

*Close the old chest, and turn its rusted key;
Let darkness fall upon the half-told tale.
The prying eye no longer may avail,
For time has wrapped the end in mystery.
Did Fate relent and set its victims free?
Was Love too strong? were Honor's bonds too
frail?*

*All this the distant years in silence veil —
The riddle's end may not unravelled be.*

*Yet sometimes Love, in anger, deigns to ask,
Who set ye, O ye Churchmen, to God's task?
Would He join those whose love to hate doth turn,
And tear asunder hearts with love that burn?
Know ye the souls whom God and Love would
mate?*

"Behold your houses left all desolate."

By Gaza's Gate — A Cantata

By Gaza's Gate — A Cantata

Words based on the text of the Polychrome Bible

Recitative.

Far to the south, in desert waste,
Lies Gaza, glittering in the sun.
The hot winds blow; the road runs low
That comes from sea-swept Ashkelon;
And, on the wall that rings the town,
Grim turrets on the stranger frown.
The gate is high, the gate is wide,
And thro' it, in a living tide,
The caravans and horsemen ride;
But when the night falls, still and sweet,
It stays the tread of many feet.

Within the gate, in bower of love,
Lay Samson, "Judah's mighty man."
Daring the foe, for love's fond glow,
Too eagerly his footsteps ran.
But now, in shadow of the night,
Bright spears and armor glint the light.
His foemen wait till morn be come;
Then all too late! Then all too late!
Samson must fall and meet his fate
At Gaza's strong and lofty gate.

Chorus of Gazeans.

All night we wait
Beside the gate,
For Samson sleeps
Within our walls;
When morning breaks,
From dreams he wakes,
With none to rescue
When he calls.

Our gate is wide,
Our gate is high,
Strong is each post,
Broad is its bar;
Woe him betide
When he comes nigh!
His life is lost, —
Samson must die!
Judah's "great man of war."

SAMSON.

Up Hebron's hill I mount,
And dare ye follow me?
Your mighty gate I count
A little thing to be.
I rent your gateposts wide;
I burst your oaken bar;
Woe, woe, shall all betide
Who foes of Samson are!

Up Hebron's hill I climb;
Where were ye when I sped

At midnight's silent time?
For lo! ye all had fled;
And with one mighty strain
I lifted high your gate,
And here, on Hebron's hill
Your slow approach I wait.
Ye will not come,
Ye dare not come,
Till I am gone;
Else would ye meet the doom
That fell on some
That dwelt in Ashkelon.

Recitative.

Down in the vale where fair Delilah dwells
Philistia's princes come to ask her aid:
"When once the secret of his might he tells,
Then bind him fast, and be not thou afraid;
For round thy home our armed men shall wait,
Our host shall lead him captive who has slain
Philistia's bravest, and within the gate;
In Gaza's dungeons shall he long remain.
And unto thee we bring these gifts of gold,
And gifts of silver and of rubies red;
More shall be thine, — more than thine arms can
hold, —
The welcome price for him whom all men dread."

DELILAH — *Solo.*

What ye ask ye cannot know;
Take ye back the gifts ye bear;

Nor for all the sullen glow
Of your jewels do I care.

If my love I must betray,
'T is because my heart is true
To Philistia. Woe the day
When I harkened unto you!

For wherever Samson's name
And his mighty deeds are told
Men shall know me and my shame, —
Take ye back your gifts of gold.

But *Philistia* asks my aid.
Shall *she* cry in vain to me?
Samson die! by love betrayed!
For I love *her* more than thee.

DELILAH.

Samson, I kneel, I entreat,
Whence is the power of thine arm?
How dost thou ever defeat
My people? Oh, tell me thy charm.

Chorus.

Samson, beware!
Thy flowing hair
Was vowed to God
Since childhood's hour.
Reveal it not
To foes who plot
To rob thee of thy power.

SAMSON.

Love, 't is little you ask ;
Bind me with cords that are seven :
New-made, fit for the bow,
That never have sung in war
The fierce, wild song of the fight, —
The soft, strange hiss, like the snow
Sweeping o'er Lebanon's height
When the winds of winter blow.
[She binds him with cords and sings.]

DELILAH.

Sleep, Samson, sleep !
Love watch o'er thee is keeping ;
None may molest
When love guards love that 's sleeping.
[He sleeps.]
Samson, awake ! Philistia's armies come.
Wake, Samson, wake : to meet thy doom !

Recitative.

But as a strand of flax
Snaps at the breath of fire,
So Samson burst his bonds
And mocked his foes' desire.

DELILAH.

False hast thou been,
And thou hast lied to me :
Come, tell me truly
What I ask of thee.

SAMSON.

Now will I tell thee true,
My locks are seven;
Weave, weave them tight
In thy loom to-night, —
My answer now is given.

DELILAH.

Sleep, Samson, sleep!
Love watch o'er thee is keeping;
None may molest
When love guards love that's sleeping.
[*He sleeps.*]
Samson, awake! Philistia's armies come.
Wake, Samson, wake: to meet thy doom!

Chorus.

Woof and web and shining strands,
Woven close and beaten tight;
Deadly wiles of snowy hands,
Binding all thy wondrous might;
Woof and web and busy loom,
Woven mesh of waving hair,
Thou hast torn, yet still thy doom
Creepeth closer in the air.

DELILAH.

Ah, love, how canst thou say "My heart is
thine,"
When in thy heart a secret lurks unseen?
Like poison in the cool and amber wine,
Thou lovest not, or this had never been.

SAMSON.

“Love!” “Love!” How lightly thou canst cry
That little word! And yet I know
That if I tell thee I must die,
And into death without thee go.

And I am weary — weary long —
Of all thy pleading, yet my heart
Is moved to tears by thy sweet song.
Deceiver, dear but false thou art;

But I am vanquished! Love has won!
Without my locks my strength is gone.

DELILAH.

Sleep, Samson, sleep!
Now hast thou told me all.
Now is thy secret gone
Beyond recalling;
Upon my lap
Forget thy vanished might,
Thy waving locks
In wondrous beauty falling.
Wake, Samson, wake!
No more — no more I call.
Wake, and into the hands of foemen fall!

Chorus.

Nevermore thro' Timanth's shade
Samson comes when noon is high.
None shall watch, nor man, nor maid,
For his beauty passing by.

Thro' the vineyards, at the eve,
Nevermore shall Samson stray;
Nor his blinded eyes perceive
All the loveliness of day.

But a festival they hold,
Unto Dagon, — at his shrine, —
And their hearts are strong and bold,
And they flush with pride and wine:
“Lead out Samson. Let us see
Him in all his misery.
Blind and weary, bound in chains,
Let us see if strength remains.”

Recitative.

Under the vaulted roof stood Samson, quite aloof
From all the mocking, merrymaking throng.
Tired with the sport he made, he to his warders
said:

“Lead me aside; I would abide
A little space, to rest my weariness,
Where yonder pillars rise toward the skies.
Now be ye kind, for I am blind,
And pity my distress.”
Then, when his fingers press,
He grasps the pillars close;
He bows him as to rest, and silent rose
Up to Jehovah's throne his dying prayer.

SAMSON — *Solo.*

Remember me, this once! Remember me,
O God of Manoah, my father; God,

Who in the flame
Upon his altar rose
Up to thy heaven,
Revealing not thy name,
Thine aid I claim.
Remember me, this once! Remember me;
Remember all my wrong,
Forget my sin.
Give me my strength once more,
The strength I had before,
When there were none so strong;
And let me win
In the last fight,
Ere cometh death and night,
The victory for which alone I long.
Remember me;
This once remember me!

Chorus.

Samson in death shall win.
Mourn not for him,
Nor eyes be dim
With tears that would ever flow, —
Samson in death shall win.

Chorus.

Then did he bow;
Then bent he to the strain,
Till the great pillars
Groaned and creaked again;
And all the house aloft,
Upon the players

Playing music soft,
And singers singing
Low and sweet,
And men and maidens
Bowing at the feet
Of Dagon, on his golden throne,
Came crashing down.

Chorus.

Samson in death has won.
Mourn not for him,
Nor eyes be dim
With tears that would endlessly flow.
Thousands with him lie low, —
Samson in death has won.

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